

01-31-00

A

Patent Application Transmittal

(only for new nonprovisional applications under 37 C.F.R. 1.53(b))

Correspondence Address:
FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
745 FIFTH AVENUE
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10151
TEL: (212) 588-0800
FAX: (212) 588-0500

Date: January 27, 2000

Attorney Docket No.: 450117-02354

ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
Box Patent Application
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

With reference to the filing in the United States Patent and Trademark Office
of an application for patent in the name(s) of:

Ernö KOVACS

entitled:

MOBILE AGENT SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR CONTROLLING A MOBILE AGENT SYSTEM

The following are enclosed:

- ☒ Specification (15 pages)
- ☒ 4 Sheet(s) of Drawings
- ☒ 22 Claim(s) (including 2 independent claim(s))
- ☐ This application contains a multiple dependent claim

- ☒ Our check for \$ 766.00, calculated on the basis of the claims as amended by any enclosed preliminary amendment as follows:

Basic Fee, \$690.00 (\$345.00)	\$ 690.00
Number of Claims in excess of 20 at \$18.00 (\$9.00) each: 2	36.00
Number of Independent Claims in excess of 3 at \$78.00 (\$39.00) each:	-0-
Multiple Dependent Claim Fee at \$260.00 (\$130.00)	-0-
Total Filing Fee	\$ 726.00
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assignment Recording Fee \$40.00	\$ 40.00

- ☒ Oath or Declaration and Power of Attorney

☒ New ☒ signed ☐ unsigned
☐ Copy from a prior application (37 C.F.R. 1.63(d))

- ☒ Certified copy of each of the following application(s) to substantiate the claim(s) for priority made in the Declaration:

<u>Application No.</u>	<u>Filed</u>	<u>In</u>
99101581.9	29 January 1999	EP

Please charge any additional fees required for the filing of this application or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0320.

Respectfully submitted,

FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
Attorneys for Applicant

By: William S. Frommer
 William S. Frommer
 Reg. No. 25,506

01/28/00
JC585 U.S. PTO

01/28/00
JC584 U.S. PTO
09/494158

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : Ernő KOVACS
Filed : Herewith
For : MOBILE AGENT SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR CONTROLLING A
MOBILE AGENT SYSTEM

745 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10151
Tel. (212) 588-0800

EXPRESS MAIL

Mailing Label Number EL375194201US
Date of Deposit January 27, 2000
I hereby certify that this paper or fee is being
deposited with the United States Postal Service
"Express Mail Post Office to Addressee" Service
under 37 CFR 1.10 on the date indicated above and
is addressed to the Assistant Commissioner for
Patents, Washington, D.C. 20231.
Charles Jackson
(Typed or printed name of person
mailing paper or fee)
Charles Jackson
(Signature of person mailing paper or fee)

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Assistant Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

Before the issuance of the first Official Action,
please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 4, line 1, delete "or 3";

Claim 5, line 1, delete "or 3";

Claim 6, line 1, delete "or 3";

Claim 7, line 1, delete "one of the claims 2 to 6" and
insert --claim 2--;

Claim 8, line 1, delete "one of the claims 2 to 7" and
insert --claim 2--;

Claim 9, line 1, delete "one of the claims 1 to 8" and
insert --claim 1--;

Claim 10, line 1, delete "one of the claims 1 to 9" and
insert --claim 1--;

Claim 11, line 1, delete "one of the claims 1 to 10"
and insert --claim 1--;

Claim 15, line 1, delete "13 or 14";

Claim 16, lines 1 and 2, delete "one of the claims 12
to 15" and insert --claim 12--;

Claim 17, lines 1 and 2, delete "one of the claims 12
to 16" and insert --claim 12--;

Claim 18, lines 1 and 2, delete "one of the claims 12
to 17" and insert --claim 12--;

Claim 19, lines 1 and 2, delete "one of the claims 12
to 18" and insert --claim 12--;

Claim 20, lines 1 and 2, delete "one of the claims 12
to 19" and insert --claim 12--;

Claim 21, lines 1 and 2, delete "one of the claims 12
to 20" and insert --claim 12--;

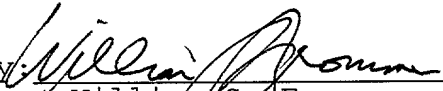
Claim 22, lines 1 and 2, delete "one of the claims 12
to 21" and insert --claim 12--.

REMARKS

The claims have been amended to eliminate multiple dependencies. The filing fee has been calculated based upon these amendments to the claims.

Respectfully submitted,

FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
Attorneys for Applicant

By: 
William S. Frommer
Reg. No. 25,506
Tel. (212) 588-0800

PATENT
450117-02354

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
APPLICATION FOR LETTERS PATENT

TITLE: MOBILE AGENT SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR
CONTROLLING A MOBILE AGENT SYSTEM

INVENTOR: Ernő KOVACS

William S. Frommer
Registration No. 25,506
FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
745 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10151
Tel. (212) 588-0800

Sony International (Europe) GmbH
S98P5140EP00
PAE98-089TRDE
Our File: P 21631 EP

5

Mobile agent system and method for controlling a mobile agent system

The present invention relates to a mobile agent system for a communication unit of a communication system. The present invention further relates to a method for controlling
10 a mobile agent system in a communication unit of a communication system. Particularly, the communication system can be a wireless telecommunication system and/or a mobile computing system.

Mobile communication, such as wireless telecommunication or mobile computing, is
15 concerned with providing networked services over wireless networks to mobile users. Mobile agents are a computing paradigm enabling the transfer of an executing piece of code or software from one node of the computer/communication network to another node. In the US patent 5 603 031, a basic approach to mobile agents is described. The basic operation of mobile agent systems is schematically shown in figure 1. An agent
20 system 1 which is implemented in a node of a communication system, e. g. a mobile station or a base station of a wireless telecommunication system or a notebook of a mobile computing system, offers mobile agents 3 an execution environment, which is called a place 4. Mobile agents 3 are pieces of executing software, which can migrate from one agent system 1 to another agent system 1. On all places 4 of the different
25 agent systems 1, the mobile agents 3 can access local services offered by a so-called system agent 2, which is a local piece of executing software.

In the current state of the art mobile agents are migrating between computing nodes of the internet. Because the communication costs in the internet are very low and the available bandwidth is sufficient, the migration step does not cause any problems and as many migration steps as necessary can be performed without significant limitation.

- 5 However, the communication costs over wireless communication links are high and the available bandwidth is low. The future communication systems will consist of combinations of wireless telecommunication, mobile computing and so on, so that the available quality of service will vary on a large scale as users will move back and forth between high-speed wireless networks and costly low-speed cellular networks.

10

The object of the present invention is therefore to provide a mobile agent system for a communication unit of a communication system and a method for controlling a mobile agent system in a communication unit of a communication system, which enable to control the migration of mobile agents in an effective and flexible way.

15

This object is solved by a mobile agent system for a communication unit of a communication system, with at least one mobile agent comprising an allocated agent policy, in which migration parameters of the respective mobile agent are defined, and migration control means for controlling the migration behavior of a mobile agent in the
20 communication system on the basis of a current migration policy of the mobile agent and current parameters of the communication system.

- The above object is further solved by a method for controlling a mobile agent system in a communication unit of a communication system, whereby the mobile agent system
25 includes at least one mobile agent comprising an allocated agent policy, in which

migration parameters of the respective mobile agent are defined, and the migration behavior of a mobile agent in the communication system is controlled on the basis of a current migration policy of the mobile agent and current parameters of the communication system.

5

The communication unit might e. g. be a base station or a mobile station of a wireless telecommunication system, a network server or a personal computer of a computing system. The current parameters of the communication system are e. g. the quality of service information of the current network. The mobile agent migration is controlled so

10 that the mobile agents only migrate if the available current parameters of the communication system match the requirements of the current migration policy of the mobile agent wishing to migrate. The present invention enables a control of the mobile agent migration, which is flexible and adaptable to different requirements.

15 Advantageously, the mobile agent system according to the present invention further comprises policy managing means for storing a system policy, in which migration behavior parameters for mobile agents of the mobile agent system are defined and policy control means for selecting the current migration policy of a mobile agent on the basis of the allocated agent policy of the mobile agent and the system policy. The

20 system policy can be stored in a system policy data base. Advantageously, the data base comprises a default system policy, in which default migration behavior parameters for all agents in the mobile agent system are defined, and one or more agent type specific policies, whereby the system policy is selected from the default system policy and the corresponding agent type specific policies. Further, the agent policy allocated to a

25 mobile agent can be selected from a default agent policy and a per-migration policy.

Advantageously, the policy control means selects the current migration policy of a mobile agent depending on the type of the provided policies. The provided policies are thereby the allocated agent policy, the system policy and/or the corresponding agent

5 type specific policy. Alternatively, the policy control means selects the current migration policy of a mobile agent depending on additional priority parameters of the provided policies. In an further alternative, the policy control means selects the current migration policy of a mobile agent depending on weighted parameters of the provided policies. Further, a combination of the three above-described ways of selecting the

10 current migration policy can be used.

The mobile agent system according to the present invention can further comprise user input means for inputting a migration policy which is taken as the current migration policy for a mobile agent, overwriting the current migration policy determined by the

15 policy control means. After performing a migration on the basis of the user defined policy, said policy control means always returns to a normal mode for the next migration policy to be selected. Thus, in case that a migration policy is input, this input migration policy overrules the allocated policy, the system policy and/or the agent type specific policy. Alternatively or in combination thereto, the user input means can be

20 provided for inputting a migration mode for the mobile agent system, whereby said input migration mode defines a particular migration policy which is kept by said policy control means until a new migration mode is input.

The mobile agent system according to the present invention can further comprise user

25 operation means for changing the allocated agent policy of a mobile agent, the system

policy and/or an agent type specific policy. Further, an application programming interface connected to the migration control means retrieves the communication system parameters, as e. g. the quality of service information.

- 5 The migration control means advantageously decides on the basis of a comparison of the current migration policy of a mobile agent and the current parameters of the communication system, if the migration of the mobile agent is allowed, suspended or rejected.
- 10 The present invention is described in the following by means of a preferred embodiment relating to the enclosed drawings, in which
- figure 1 shows a basic scheme of a mobile agent migration between agent systems,
- 15 figure 2 shows a basic structure of a wireless telecommunication system,
- figure 3 shows the way of defining and computing the current migration policy according to the present invention,
- 20 figure 4 shows an example for the definition of a system policy,
- figure 5 shows a basic configuration of an agent system according to the present invention, and

figure 6 shows a detailed configuration of an agent system according to the present invention.

Figure 1 shows, as stated above, in a general way how mobile agents are used. An agent system 1, which is implemented in a node of a communication system, provides an execution environment, a so-called place 4, for mobile agents 3. A mobile agent is a piece of software, which has one or more execution threads attached to it. It is executed in a dedicated execution environment, which is called a place 4, that controls the actions performed by the mobile agent very tightly. The place 4 is managed by its agent system 1. The mobile agents 3 can migrate from one agent system 1 to another agent system 1, which is implemented in a different node of the communication system. On all places 4, the mobile agents 3 can access local services offered by so-called system agents 2, which are local pieces of executing software.

Figure 2 shows the basic structure of a wireless telecommunication system comprising mobile devices 5, base stations or gateways 6 and network servers 7. The network servers 7 and the base stations 6 are linked by a wired connection, whereas the mobile devices 5 and the base stations 6 communicate by means of a wireless link. The agent system 1 according to the present invention can be implemented in each of the three different types of nodes of the shown telecommunication system, namely a mobile device 5, a base station 6 or a network server 7.

In the migration process, e. g. if a mobile agent 3 is migrating from a mobile device 5 to a base station 6, the mobile agent is serialized on the respective place 4, and the state and the code of the mobile agent 3 are transferred to the base station 6. There the

mobile agent 3 is recreated from the state and the code. Thereafter, the execution of the mobile agent 3 can continue.

The migration process is thereby controlled on the basis of a current migration policy of a mobile agent 3. The current migration policy thereby defines the way the agent system 1 checks the current network parameters and determines the migration behavior of a mobile agent 3. In figure 3, the way of defining and computing a current migration policy of a mobile agent 3 is shown. The behavior of a migrating mobile agent 3 is influenced by different principals. The system administrator defines the system policy 11, which can be a default system policy 12 or an agent type policy 13. The default system policy 12 comprises the default behavior parameters for all mobile agents 3 of the agent system 1. In case that the mobile agents 3 used in an agent system 1 can be classified into different agent types, an agent type policy 13 can be defined, in which different type specific policies for the different specific types of mobile agents are defined. In this case, the agent type policy 13 normally overrules the default system policy 12. With the agent type policies, different system behaviors can be associated. For example, most agent systems 1 only differentiate between mobile and stationary agents. Mobile agents are allowed to roam in the network and are tightly controlled. Stationary agents are supplied by the agent system and might access local system resources. Provision of agent type specific policies 13 allows classifying a mobile agent 3 not only according to its basic characteristics, which are defined in the default system policy 12, but also according to other properties and enables thus a more flexible and adaptable control of the migration process of a mobile agent 3.

During the policy determination, the agent system computes the system policy 11 valid for the mobile agent 3 who wants to migrate on the basis of the default system policy 12 and the agent type policy 13.

- 5 Every mobile agent 3 has an allocated agent policy 8, which is either a default agent policy 10 or a Per-Migration policy 9. The Per-Migration policy 9 is only valid for the next migration step. A migrating mobile agent 3 always carries its allocated agent policy 8. The agent policy 8 defines parameters of the appropriate mobile agent properties in the agent system 1. Usually, the Per-Migration policy 9 overrules the
- 10 default agent policy 10 in the next migration step. The conflict resolution required to decide, which of the competing system policy 11 and agent policy 8 are selected to become the current migration policy can be solved in different ways, which are explained below.
- 15 Further, the current user can input user commands 14 to influence the current migration policy. Either the policy resulting from the conflict resolution between the system policy 11 and the agent policy 8 or the user command determines the migration behavior 15, which is defined by the current migration policy. Usually, a user command defining the current migration policy directly overrules the policy emerging
- 20 from the conflict resolution between the system policy 11 and the agent policy 8.

In figure 4, a system policy data base is shown, which is defined by an system administrator and stored in the agent system. The system policy data base comprises a default system policy 12 and agent type policies 13, from which the system policy 11 is

25 chosen. In figure 5, an agent system 1 with an agent place 4 is shown. A mobile agent

3 in the place 4 has its allocated agent policy 8 stored in the agent properties. The parameters describing the properties of the respective mobile agent 3 are e. g. its owner, its resource constraints etc. The properties can thereby be stored in an agent property data base of the agent system 11. One of the properties stored in the agent
5 property data base can be the agent policy 8.

In case that the mobile agent 3 migrates to another agent system 1, it takes its agent properties along to the other agent system. The agent policy 8 being a part of the agent properties can be changed by a set operation performed e. g. by an operator. A set
10 operation is performed by a mobile agent 3 during execution to retrieve parameters needed for processing.

A policy is described through its type, its name and its set of parameters (<policySpec>) defining the intended behavior of the system. The <policySpec>
15 defines a set of policy parameters, that will be checked when the migration of the mobile agent 3 shall actually be performed.

	<policy>	::= "POLICY" <policyType> ":" <policyName> "(" <policySpec> ")"
	<policyType>	::= STRING.
20	<policyName>	::= STRING.
	<policySpec>	::= "(" <parameterName> <parameterValue> ")"
	<parameterName>	::= STRING.
	<parameterValue>	::= STRING.

25 The parameters of the policies are key/value pairs. The parameters can e. g. be divided into several classes, namely threshold parameters, action parameters and preference

parameters. The threshold parameters define limits on the current parameters of the communication system, e. g. network quality of service parameters, which the communication system must meet to allow a migration of a mobile agent 3. The action parameters define parameters for certain actions which the agent system 1 might perform to enforce this particular policy, e. g. action parameters define the time-out values if the mobile agent 3 has to wait for migration, allow the agent system 1 to dial, etc. The preference parameters define preferences of the user in certain situations, e. g. when to decide between different options. The following table gives an example of possible policy parameters:

10

Name of Parameter	Description
MinNetworkSpeed	Minimum Speed of the Network required to allow migration.
MaxTransferTime	Maximum Time for Transferring the Agent
MaxCostPerMin	Maximum Cost of the Network usage per minute (in the case of connection oriented networks)
MaxCostPerByte	Maximum Cost per Byte (in the case of packet oriented networks)
SuspendTimeout	Timeout value in case the agent will be suspended
doNotSuspend	If the migration policy does not allow the agent to migrate, the agent will not be suspended, but the attempt will be rejected.

In figure 6, the detailed configuration of an agent system 1 according to the present invention is shown. The agent system 1 is implemented in a node of a communication system and comprises a place 4, which is an execution environment for mobile agents

15 3. The agent system 1 comprises a migration control means 16 connected to a migration

means 19 and a suspend means 20. The migration control means 16 is further connected to a policy control means 18 and to an application programming interface 23. The policy control means 18 is connected to a policy managing means 17. The agent policy 8 of a mobile agent 3 of the agent system 1 is e. g. stored together with other agent
 5 properties in the policy control means 18. In the policy managing means 17, the system policy data base for the system policy 11 is stored. The system policy 11 in the policy managing means 17 can be changed by a user through a user operation means 22 connected to the policy managing means 17.

10 The migration control means 16 controls the migration behavior of a mobile agent 3 on the basis of a current migration policy of the mobile agent 3 and current parameters of the communication system retrieved over the application programming interface 23. Thereby, the current migration policy of the mobile agent 3 is determined on the basis of the agent policy 8 of the mobile agent 3 and the system policy 11 stored in the policy
 15 managing means 17. The policy control means 18 thereby performs a conflict processing to select a respective system policy 11 or agent policy 8 as the current migration policy. This selected current migration policy can be overruled by a direct input from a user over the user input means 21 connected to the policy control means 18. Over the user input means 21, either a migration policy which is taken as the
 20 current migration policy for the mobile agent 3 or a migration mode for the mobile agent system 1 can be input. In case that a migration policy as the current migration policy is input through the user input means 21, the policy control means 18 always returns to a normal mode for the next migration policy to be selected, whereas, in case that a migration mode is input, the migration mode is kept by said policy control means
 25 18 until a new migration mode is determined.

The selected current migration policy is supplied from the policy control means 18 to the migration control means 16, which executes the resulting migration behavior by comparing the respective parameters of the resulting current migration policy with the

5 current parameters of the communication system to determine, if a mobile agent 3 may migrate or not. If the mobile agent 3 is allowed to migrate, the migration means 18 transfers the mobile agent 3 to another agent system 1. If the mobile agent 3 is not or not yet allowed to migrate, the suspend means 20 suspends the migration. In case that the migration control means 16 rejects the migration attempt, the mobile agent 3 is

10 restarted and the failure is signaled to the mobile agent 3. In case that the mobile agent 3 is allowed to migrate, the migration means 19 might dial into the communication system and set up a connection for the transmission of the mobile agent 3, e. g. from a mobile device 5 to a base station 6 as shown in figure 2.

15 In the following, different mechanisms for the conflict resolution upon the selection of a current policy from the system policy 11 or the agent policy 8 in the policy control means 18 is described. Since the different policies are defined by several entities, e. g. a current user, a system administrator or the mobile agent 3 itself, a conflict resolution scheme is required if two policies are conflicting. This conflict resolution is performed

20 in the policy control means 18, which takes the conflicting policies, e. g. the system policy 11 from the policy managing means 17 and the agent policy 8 from the mobile agent 3, and determines the resulting policy. For the conflict resolution, different schemes are possible. Firstly, the policy control means 18 can select the current migration policy depending on the type of the provided policies. In this so-called source

25 emphasis strategy, the policy control means 18 will simply emphasize a specific source

of the policy, e. g. the agent policy 8 or the system policy 11. Secondly, the policy control means 18 may select the current migration policy depending on additional priority parameters of the provided policies. In this so-called priority strategy, the different policies comprise additional priority parameters defining the respective priority

5 of the policy. The policy control means 18 determines the current policy according to the defined priorities. Thirdly, the policy control means 18 can select the current migration policy depending on weighting parameters of the provided policies. In this case, all possible settings of the policies are weighted. The policy control means 18 selects the policy with the highest weight. The weighting function can be computed

10 such that e. g. more cost-effective strategies gain higher weights. Further, the policy control means 18 can combine several policies by combining the policy parameters of the conflicting policies. In this case, a conflict resolution must be performed for each individual parameter.

15 By means of the user input means 21 connected to the policy control means 18, a current user might overrule the current policy selected by the policy control means 18 by defining the particular actions or switching to a specific modus. Actions defer from setting a modus in the sense that an action is performed and the agent system returns to the normal modus after the action, namely the migration of a particular mobile agent 3,

20 is terminated. If a user selects a specific modus, the modus will remain selected until the user switches to another modus. Actions will always terminate a special modus and thereafter, the policy control means 18 returns to the normal modus.

Possible actions are e. g. an allow migration action, a stop migration action or an

25 enforce migration action. At an allow migration action, all waiting mobile agents 3 are

migrated to the corresponding remote nodes. Further agent migration attempts will be handled using the current migration policy determined by the policy control means 18. At a stop migration action, all migrations are stopped and no other migrations are performed during a predetermined time period. At an enforce migration action, all
 5 mobile agents 3 are forced to leave the current agent system 1, which will be enforced by the policy control means 18 and the migration control means 16.

Possible modus settings are e. g. a normal modus, a NoMigration modus, an AllowMigration modus, an AllowDialIn modus or an UseUnusedResources modus. The
 10 normal modus is the modus in which the agent system 1 returns, when a normal migration policy is enforced. In the NoMigration modus, ongoing migrations are stopped and no further migrations are attempted. This state continues until the user makes a corresponding input to return to the normal modus. In the AllowMigration modus, a mobile agent 3 might migrate anytime if the communication unit is connected
 15 to the communication system. In the AllowDialIn modus, a mobile agent 3 is allowed to migrate anytime. The migrate command will result in a dial-in operation if required. In the UseUnusedResources modus, a mobile agent 3 might migrate, if unused bandwidth is available.

20 As example, a mobile agent 3 is assumed, which has an allocated default system policy 12 comprising the parameters of a minimum network speed of 9,6 Kbit, maximum costs per minute of 1,- DM and suspension of time-out of 30 minutes. In this case, the migration control means 16 will check if the network speed of the current available network is equal or higher than 9,6 Kbit (which is enough for GSM), and if the costs
 25 per minute are not higher than 1,- DM per minute (which is usually the case after

6 p.m.). If one or both of the requirements cannot be achieved, the agent will be suspended. During this time, the conditions will be reevaluated over the application program interface 23 regularly until the agent is allowed to migrate. The suspension of time-out parameter defines that the mobile agent 3 will only be suspended for 30
5 minutes. After that period the migration attempt is rejected.

The present invention therefore provides a mobile agent system, which can adapt the migration operation to the current parameters of the communication system, thus saving expensive communication costs particularly over wireless networks. Further, the
10 proposed policy mechanism allows a flexible specification of the migration behavior. The proposed policy determination and conflict resolution mechanism allow a definition and enforcement of policies by the system administrator and the mobile agent itself. Further, the proposed overruling mechanism allows a current user of the communication unit to overrule the current migration policy settings, thus giving him
15 full control over the behavior of the agent system.

Sony International (Europe) GmbH
S98P5140EP00
PAE98-089TRDE
Our File: P 21631 EP

5

Claims

1. Mobile agent system (1) for a communication unit (5, 6, 7) of a communication system, with

10 at least one mobile agent (3) comprising an allocated agent policy (8), in which migration parameters of the respective mobile agent are defined,

migration control means (16) for controlling the migration behavior of a mobile agent (3) in the communication system on the basis of a current migration policy of the mobile agent (3) and current parameters of the communication system.

15

2. Mobile agent system (1) according to claim 1,

characterized by

policy managing means (17) for storing a system policy (11), in which migration behavior parameters for mobile agents (3) of the mobile agent system (1) are defined,

20 and

policy control means (18) for selecting the current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) on the basis of the allocated agent policy (8) of the mobile agent (3) and the system policy (11).

25 3. Mobile agent system (1) according to claim 2,

characterized in,

that the system policy (11) is a default system policy (12) or an agent type specific policy (13).

4. Mobile agent system (1) according to claim 2 or 3,

5 **characterized in,**

that the policy control means (18) selects the current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) depending on the type of the provided policies.

5. Mobile agent system (1) according to claim 2 or 3,

10 **characterized in,**

that the policy control means (18) selects the current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) depending on additional priority parameters of the provided policies.

6. Mobile agent system (1) according to claim 2 or 3,

15 **characterized in,**

that the policy control means (18) selects the current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) depending on weighting parameters of the provided policies.

7. Mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 2 to 6,

20 **characterized by**

user input means (21) for inputting a migration policy which is taken as the current migration policy for a mobile agent (3), whereby said policy control means (18) always returns to a normal mode for the next migration policy to be selected.

25 8. Mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 2 to 7,

characterized by

user input means (21) for inputting a migration mode for the mobile agent system (1),
whereby said input migration mode is kept by said policy control means (18) until a
new migration mode is input.

5

9. Mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 1 to 8,

characterized by

user operation means (22) for changing the allocated agent policy (8) of a mobile agent
(3), and/or the system policy (11).

10

10. Mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 1 to 9,

characterized by

an application programming interface (13) connected to the migration control means
(16) for retrieving the current parameters of the communication system.

15

11. Mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 1 to 10,

characterized in,

that said migration control means (16) decides on the basis of a comparison of the
current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) and the current parameters of the
communication system, if the migration of the mobile agent (3) is allowed, suspended
or rejected.

20

12. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) in a communication unit of a
communication system, whereby

the mobile agent system (1) includes at least one mobile agent (3) comprising an allocated agent policy (8), in which migration parameters of the respective mobile agent (3) are defined, and

the migration behavior of a mobile agent (3) in the communication system is controlled
 5 on the basis of a current migration policy of the mobile agent (3) and current parameters of the communication system.

13. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to claim 12,
characterized by

10 storing a system policy (11), in which migration behavior parameters for mobile agents (3) of the mobile agent system (1) are defined, and
 selecting the current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) on the basis of the allocated agent policy (8) of the mobile agent (3) and the system policy (11).

15 14. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to claim 13,
characterized in,

that said system policy (11) is a default system policy (12) or an agent type specific policy (13).

20 15. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to claim 12, 13 or 14,
characterized in,

that current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) is selected depending on the type of the provided policies.

16. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 12 to 15,

characterized in,

- 5 that the current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) is selected depending on additional priority parameters of the provided policies.

17. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 12 to 16,

10 **characterized in,**

that the current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) is selected depending on weighting parameters of the provided policies.

18. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 12 to 17,

characterized in,

that upon inputting a migration policy which is taken as the current migration policy for a mobile agent (3), the agent system (1) always returns to a normal mode for the next migration policy to be selected.

20

19. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 12 to 18,

characterized in,

that upon inputting a migration mode for the mobile agent system (1), said input

- 25 migration mode is kept until a new migration mode is input.

20. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 12 to 19,

characterized by

- 5 providing a user operation means (22) for changing the allocated agent policy (8) of a mobile agent (3) and/or the system policy (11).

21. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 12 to 20,

- 10 **characterized by**

retrieving the current parameters of the communication system over an application programming interface (23).

22. Method for controlling a mobile agent system (1) according to one of the claims 12 to 21,

characterized by

deciding on the basis of a comparison of the current migration policy of a mobile agent (3) and the current parameters of the communication system, if the migration of the mobile agent (3) is allowed, suspended or rejected.

Sony International (Europe) GmbH
S98P5140EP00
PAE98-089TRDE
Our File: P 21631 EP

5

Abstract

The present invention relates to a mobile agent system (1) for a communication unit
(5, 6, 7) of a communication system, with at least one mobile agent (3) comprising an
10 allocated agent policy (8), in which migration parameters of the respective mobile agent
(3) are defined, migration control means (16) for controlling the migration behavior of
a mobile agent (3) in the communication system on the basis of a current migration
policy of the mobile agent (3) and current parameters of the communication system.
The present invention further relates to a method for controlling such a mobile agent
15 system (1) and allows a flexible way of controlling the migration behavior of mobile
agents (3) depending on system parameters.

(Figure 3)

FIG 1

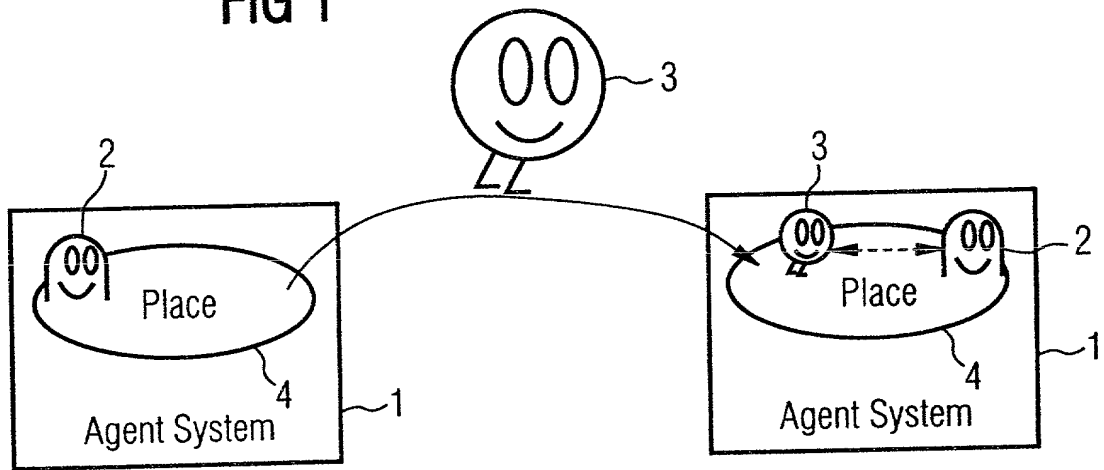


FIG 2

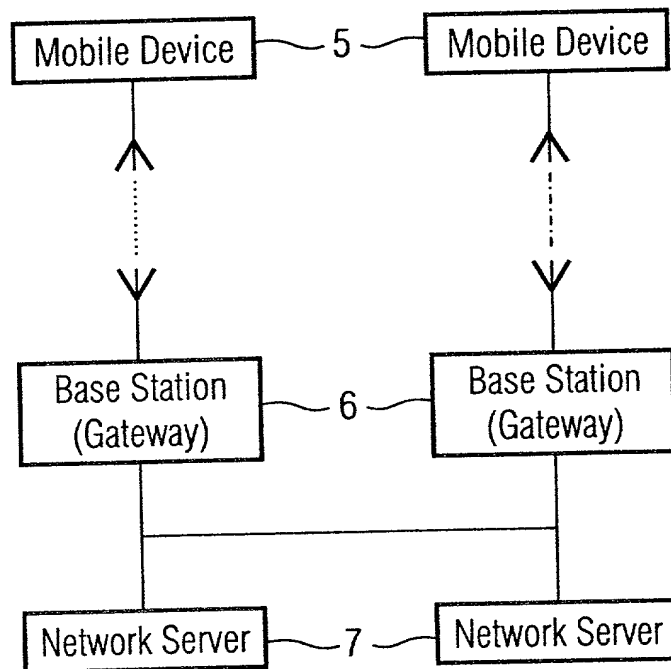


FIG 3

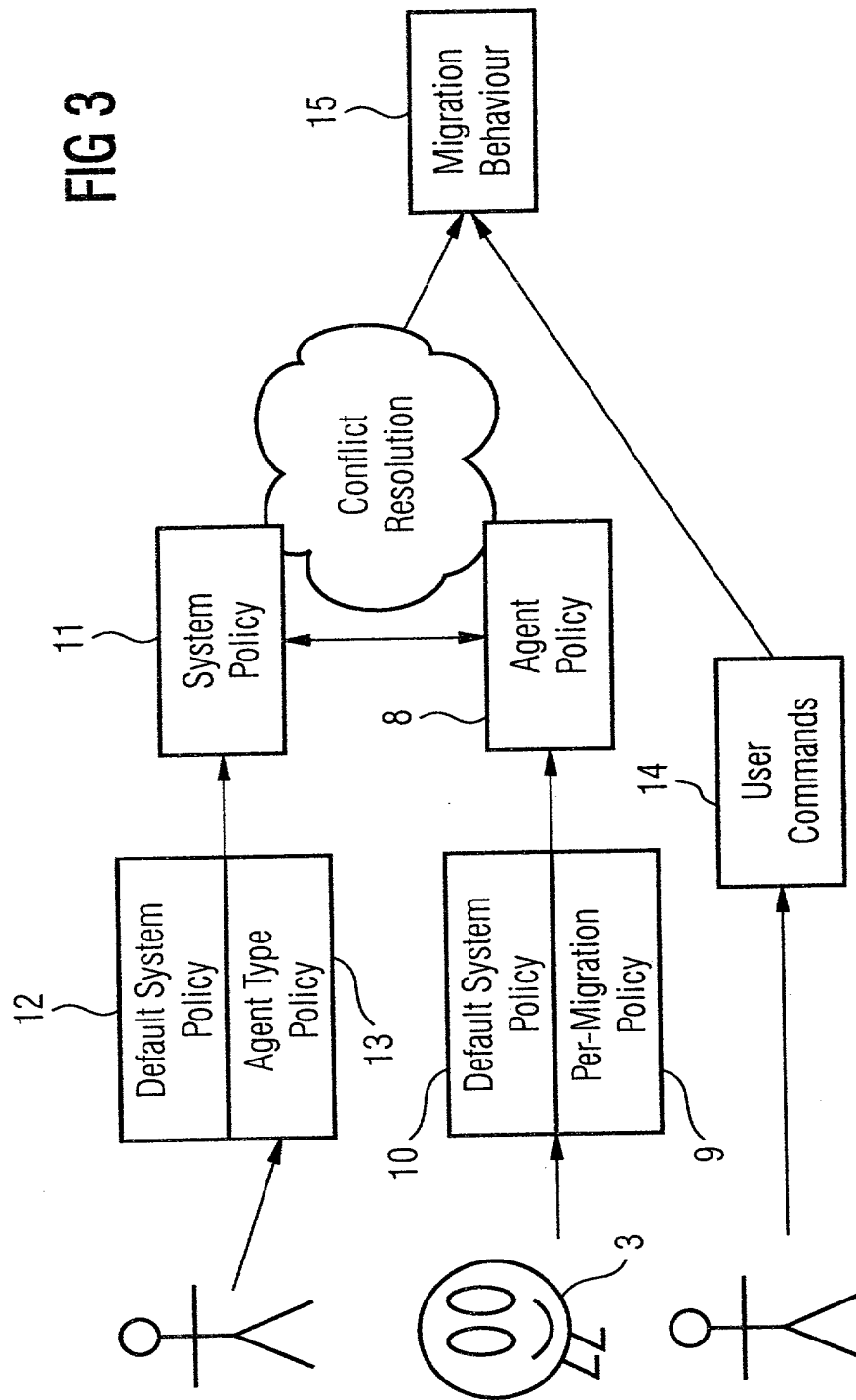


FIG 4

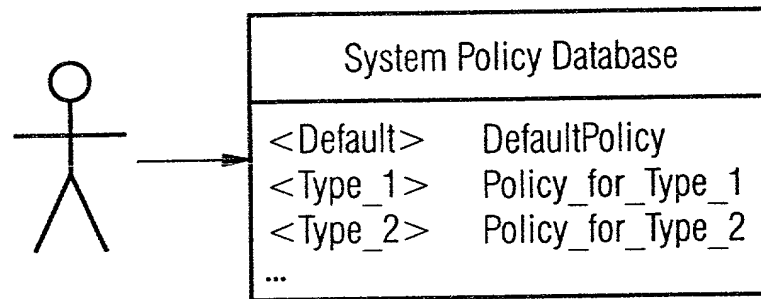


FIG 5

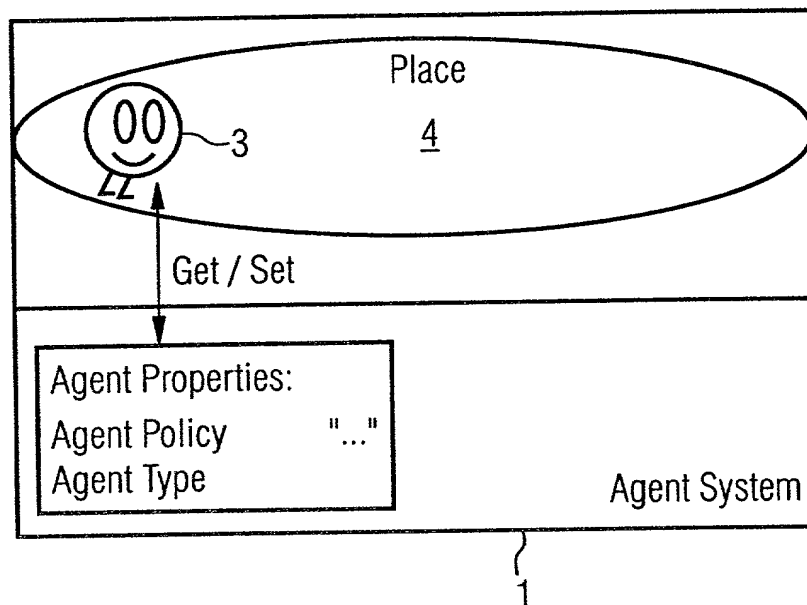
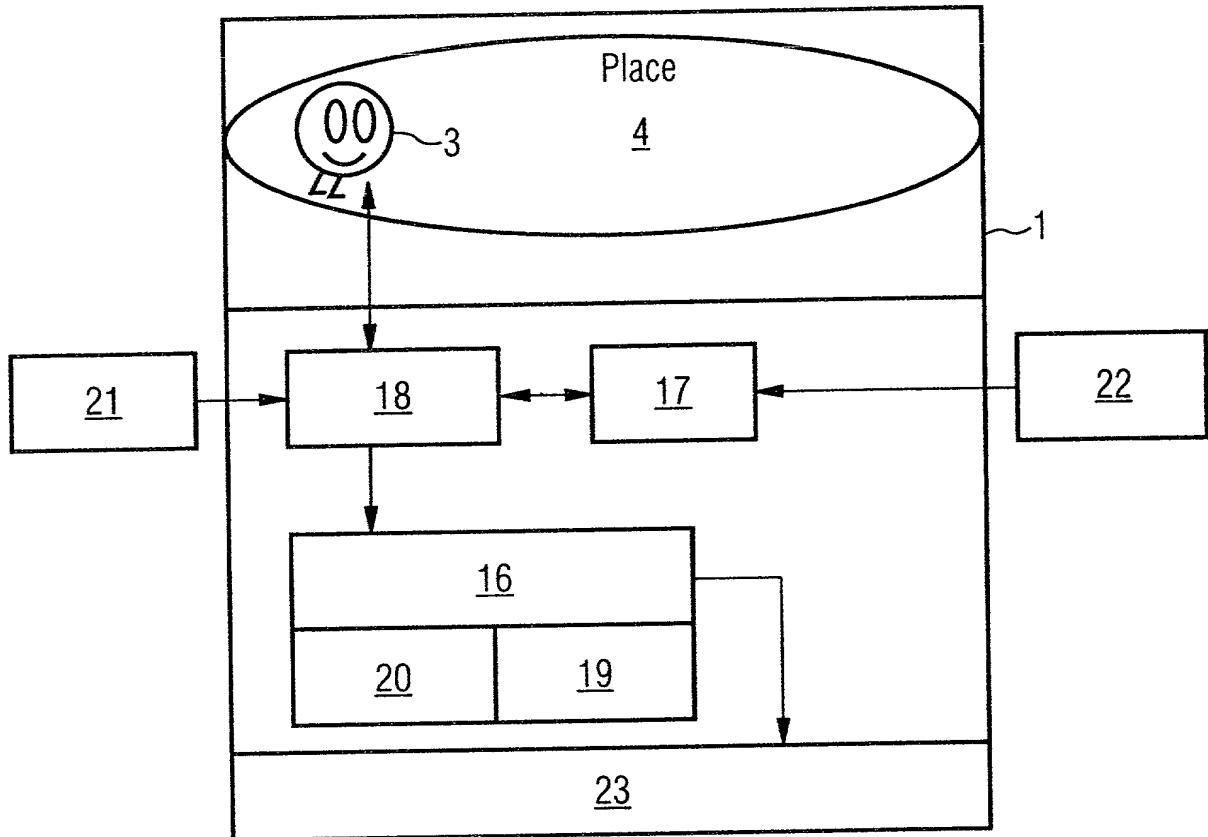


FIG 6



DECLARATION FOR PATENT APPLICATION (JOINT OR SOLE)
(Under 37 CFR § 1.63; with Power of Attorney)
FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP

As a below named inventor, I hereby declare that:

My residence, post office address and citizenship are as stated below next to my name.

I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only one name is listed below) or an original, first and joint inventor (if plural names are listed below) of the subject matter which is claimed and for which a patent is sought on the invention ENTITLED:

Mobile agent system and method for controlling a mobile agent system

the specification of which

☒ is attached hereto.

☐ was filed on _____ as Application Serial No.

with amendment(s) through _____ (if applicable, give dates).

I hereby state that I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims, as amended by any amendment referred to above.

I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the United States Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Sec. 1.56.

I hereby claim foreign priority benefits under Title 35, United States Code, § 119 of any foreign application(s) for patent or inventor's certificate listed below and have also identified below any foreign application for patent or inventor's certificate having a filing date before that of the application on which priority is claimed:

Prior Foreign Application(s) [list additional applications on separate page]:

Priority Claimed:

Number
99 101 581.9

Country
EP

Filed(Day/Month/Year)
29 January 1999

Yes
☒

No
☐

I hereby claim the benefit under Title 35, United States Code, § 120 of any United States application(s) listed below and, insofar as the subject matter of each of the claims of this application is not disclosed in the prior United States application in the manner provided by the first paragraph of Title 35, United States Code § 112, I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the United States Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in Title 37, Code of Federal Regulations, Sec. 1.56, which became available between the filing date of the prior application and the national or PCT international filing date of this application:

Prior U.S. Application(s) [list additional applications on separate page]:

Appln. Ser. Number:

Filed (Day/Month/Year):

Status (patented, pending, abandoned):

I hereby appoint WILLIAM S. FROMMER, Registration No. 25,506, and DENNIS M. SMID, Registration No. 34,930 or their duly appointed associate, my attorneys, with full power of substitution and revocation, to prosecute this application, to make alterations and amendments therein, to file continuation and divisional applications thereof, to receive the Patent, and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office and in the Courts in connection therewith, and specify that all communications about the application are to be directed to the following correspondence address:

WILLIAM S. FROMMER, Esq.
c/o FROMMER LAWRENCE & HAUG LLP
745 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10151

Direct all telephone calls to:
(212) 588-0800
to the attention of:
WILLIAM S. FROMMER

I hereby declare that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.

INVENTOR(S):

Signature: X C. Kovacs

Date: X 8. Dec. 1999

Full name of sole or first inventor: Ernö KOVACS
Residence: D-70565 Stuttgart, Germany
Citizenship: German/American

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Full name of 2nd joint inventor (if any):

Residence:
Citizenship:

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Full name of 3rd joint inventor (if any):

Residence:
Citizenship:

[Similarly list additional inventors on separate page]

Post office Address(es) of inventor(s):
[if all inventors have the same post office address]

c/o Sony International (Europe) GmbH
Stuttgart Technology Center
Stuttgarter Str. 106
D-70736 Fellbach, GERMANY

Note: In order to qualify for reduced fees available to Small Entities, each inventor and any other individual or entity having rights to the invention must also sign an appropriate separate "Verified Statement (Declaration) Claiming [or Supporting a Claim by Another for] Small Entity Status" form [e.g. for Independent Inventor, Small Business Concern, Nonprofit Organization, individual Non-Inventor].

Note: A post office address must be provided for each inventor.